



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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E.O. 12065 NA

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE

REF: KABUL 2296

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FEBRUARY 16 ARTICLE IN NEW YORK
TIMES:

BEGIN TEXT: LEADERS OF US ANGRY AT SOVIET OVER CRISES ROLE:
ACCOUNTS ON AFGHANISTAN AND IRAN ARE DISPUTED
AS PLANS WENT AHEAD FOR EVACUATING AMERICANS FROM IRAN,
THE UNITED STATES ACCUSED THE SOVIET UNION TODAY OF
EFFORTS TO HELP FOMENT ANTI-AMERICAN ACTIONS IN IRAN
AND OF HAVING PLAYED A DECISIVE ROLE IN THE SHOOTOUT THAT
LED TO THE KILLING OF THE AMERICAN ENVOY AFTER HIS
ABDUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN YESTERDAY.

SO STRONG WAS THE ANGER BEING VENTED IN THE HIGHEST
GOVERNMENT LEVELS THAT OFFICIALS SAID RELATIONS WITH
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MOSCOW COULD BE SEVERELY STRAINED. THEY SAID THIS COULD

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HURT THE CLIMATE FOR CONCLUDING THE NEW ARMS-LIMITATION TREATY.

SPECIFICALLY, WASHINGTON PROTESTED TO MOSCOW OVER BROADCASTS AND ARTICLES SUGGESTING THAT THE AMERICANS WERE EAGER TO INTERVENE MILITARILY IN IRAN.

US CHARGES SOVIET INSENSITIVITY

ANOTHER PROTEST SAID THAT, AFTER AMBASSADOR ADOLPH DUBS HAD BEEN ABDUCTED BY AFGHAN DISSIDENTS, SOVIET ADVISERS PAID NO HEED TO AMERICAN REQUESTS TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY AND INSTEAD DIRECTED THE POLICE TO ATTACK THE KABUL HOTEL ROOM IN WHICH MR. DUBS WAS BEING HELD. IN THE CROSSFIRE, THE ENVOY WAS KILLED.

THE SOVIET ADVISERS ARE BEING CHARGED WITH HAVING DISPLAYED INSENSITIVITY TO MR. DUBS' FATE AND SHOWED MORE INTEREST IN CRUSHING THE ABDUCTORS THAN IN HIS SAFETY.

(IN MOSCOW, THE PRESS AGENCY TASS, ALLUDING TO THE CHARGES IN THE INCIDENT, SAID "AN ABSURD STORY IS BEING CIRCULATED ABOUT THE INVOLVEMENT OF PERSONS WHO IN REALITY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.")

IN TEHERAN, AMBASSADOR WILLIAM H. SULLIVAN DECIDED, IN CONSULTATION WITH WASHINGTON, THAT SECURITY OF AMERICANS IN IRAN COULD NO LONGER BE INSURED IN VIEW OF YESTERDAY'S ATTACK ON THE EMBASSY AND THAT IT WAS PRUDENT TO RECOMMEND THAT AMERICANS LEAVE.

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OFFICIALS SAID CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR THE EVACUATION HAD BEEN MADE AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF PRIME MINISTER SHAHPUR BAKHTIAR'S GOVERNMENT LAST WEEKEND, AND WERE NOW BEING PUT INTO EFFECT BECAUSE OF THE EVENTS OF THE LAST 36 HOURS.

WHILE THE IRANIAN WORKING GROUP, AN INTERAGENCY EMERGENCY STAFF, SOUGHT TO CHARTER PLANES FROM PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS AND SEND MILITARY TRANSPORTS AND HELICOPTERS TO TURKEY, THE ATTENTION OF POLICY-MAKERS WAS RIVETED

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ON WHAT WAS VIEWED AS A POTENTIALLY CRITICAL MOMENT IN SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE AND ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, WHO ARE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN MEXICO, HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THEIR AIDES HERE, AND THE ANGER BEING VENTED AT THE RUSSIANS, EVEN BY MR. VANCE, WHO IS USUALLY LESS AGITATED BY SOVIET ACTIONS, WAS SAID TO BE UNUSUAL.

WITH KEY LEADERS OUT OF WASHINGTON, THE PRESIDENT ASKED VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE TO RETURN FROM VAIL, COLO., WHERE

HE WAS VACATIONING. MR. MONDALE WAS ASKED "TO KEEP AN EYE ON FAST-BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST."

PRESIDENT CARTER WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN FURIOUS OVER THE REPORTED BEHAVIOR OF SOVIET ADVISERS IN THE EVENTS

IN KABUL THAT LED TO THE KILLING OF AMBASSADOR DUBS.

ON THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTIONS, THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN M. CHRISTOPHER, SUMMONED AMBASSADOR ANATOLY F. DOBRYNIN LAST NIGHT TO PROTEST, IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THE SHOCK OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OVER THE ROLE PLAYED BY SOVIET ADVISERS."

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ACCORDING TO AN ACCOUNT SENT BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN KABUL, SOVIET SECURITY OFFICIALS ATTACHED TO THEIR EMBASSY AND SOVIET ADVISERS ATTACHED TO THE AFGHAN POLICE TOOK CHARGE OF THE PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT OF A DECISION NOT TO NEGOTIATE FURTHER AND TO ATTACK THE UNIDENTIFIED ABDUCTORS WHO WERE HOLDING MR. DUBS IN THE KABUL HOTEL.

ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON, THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HAD ASKED THE AFGHANS AND THE RUSSIANS TO USE PATIENCE AND NOT TO FORCE A SHOWDOWN.

THE RUSSIANS IN THE PAST HAVE OPPOSED NEGOTIATIONS WITH TERRORISTS, AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THIS POLICY WAS EVIDENTLY PUT INTO EFFECT. THE UNITED STATES HAS USUALLY TRIED TO DRAG OUT NEGOTIATIONS IN THE HOPE OF

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AVOIDING VIOLENCE.

THE LATEST STRAIN IN RELATIONS OCCURS AT A TIME WHEN THE UNITED STATES HAS DECIDED TO MAKE NEW EFFORTS TO CONCLUDE THE ARMS-LIMITATION TALKS. MR. VANCE MET WITH MR. DOBRYNIN ON TUESDAY TO OFFER THE LATEST PROPOSALS ON SOLVING THE REMAINING ISSUES. OFFICIALS SAID THE EVENTS WERE LIKELY TO CREATE A TOUGHER MOOD IN THE GOVERNMENT AND IN CONGRESS, MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE RESULTS.

ON THE AIRLIFT, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, HODDING CARTER 3RD, SAID THAT OF THE 7000 AMERICANS IN IRAN, DOWN FROM 50,000 FOUR MONTHS AGO, 2,000 ARE MARRIED TO IRANIANS AND UNLIKELY TO LEAVE.

ABOUT 2,000 OTHERS ARE IN ISFAHAN, WHERE THE AIRPORT HAS
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BEEN CLOSED. THE REMAINING 3,000 INCLUDING 2,000 ATTACHED TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY OR THE MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP,

ARE LIKELY TO BE AMONG THE FIRST TO BE EVACUATED.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE FIRST AMERICANS WERE EXPECTED TO BE EVACUATED IN TWO CHARTERED PAN AM 747'S WHICH CAN CARRY 400 PERSONS. THEY MAY BE LANDING IN TEHRAN ON SATURDAY, WHEN THE AIRPORT IS EXPECTED TO REOPEN.

TURKEY, AFTER INITIALLY WAVERING, HAS AGREED TO ALLOW FIVE MH-53 HELICOPTERS AND SIX C-130 MILITARY TRANSPORTS TO BE POSITIONED AT THE INCIRLIK AIR BASE IN CASE THEY ARE NEEDED. THE HELICOPTERS WOULD BE USED TO FERRY PASSENGERS FROM THE EMBASSY IN TEHRAN TO THE AIRPORT.

ADDITIONAL C-5 AND C-141 MILITARY TRANSPORTS ARE IN WESTERN EUROPE AND COULD BE SENT TO IRAN. BUT IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THE IRAN GOVERNMENT WOULD ALLOW MILITARY PLANES TO LAND. END TEXT VANCE

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